

# The Bush Capital Burns Inside and Out

Her parched skin is stretched  
attenuated  
waiting for the next ferocious  
onslaught  
the 'summer terror'  
has attacked suburbia

Her desiccated spirit waits  
with bated breath  
choking

Canberra is at home  
waiting for the wind  
to change

We are all asylum seekers  
in this town now

Without warning  
our worst fears  
appear at our front door  
at the seat of government

Yet here we face a  
common enemy  
not the unkindness  
of our own kind

Fearing a firestorm  
across tinder-dry country  
into our own backyard  
we are trapped in a prolonged  
state of uncertainty

No control  
over our destiny  
will this bring home

to us what it feels  
to be in detention  
indefinitely

Hearts tremble  
hosing down the  
neighbour's roof  
hands reach out with food,  
with words of support:  
'my friend's mum knew the woman  
who died. She went back to get  
her children's things.'  
'My parents came home  
to a pile of rubble'  
'There is plenty of room  
at my place. No trouble.'

The phone rings  
emails flick back and forth  
as community  
is re-kindled  
from the ashes  
love enters our lives  
from the archives of a city

Now strangely quiet  
knowing a desire for  
more of what cannot be made  
or got  
by any force other than love  
or loss

Stories shared  
friendship offered  
putting ourselves in another's  
shoes

Let's give bikes and balls  
to the kids  
so they can freely play  
in the face of an uncertain  
normality

Let's give ourselves  
the breathing space  
to listen between the lines  
for the hum of new growth.